



News for Immediate Release  
April 30, 2004

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**DWR Observes Water Awareness Month in May**

SACRAMENTO - The Department of Water Resources (DWR), along with other water agencies throughout California, observes Water Awareness Month during May. The key message is: "Use Water Wisely."

DWR is a leading water resource management and planning agency in California. The Department operates California's State Water Project (SWP), the nation's largest State-run multipurpose water and power system. The SWP provides a supplemental water supply for 23 million Californians and irrigation water supplies for about 750,000 acres of farmland, as well as flows to benefit fish and the environment.

DWR joined with other water agencies in creating Water Awareness Month in response to California's 1987-1992 drought.

**Three Special Events**

DWR promotes special events at DWR facilities each May, encouraging careful use of water.

- On May 8, free bus tours will be provided to Oroville Dam in Butte County as part of Oroville's Feather Fiesta Days community celebration
- On May 15, a Kids Fishing Day will be held at O'Neill Forebay, near San Luis Reservoir, west of Los Banos
- On May 21, Water Awareness Day will be celebrated at Edmonston Pumping Plant south of Bakersfield with student visits from selected schools in Kern County.

DWR encourages people to stop by its three Visitors Centers. They are located at: Lake Oroville, about 75 miles north of Sacramento, via State Highway 70 or US 99; San Luis Reservoir off State Highway 152, just west of Interstate 5 in Merced County; and Pyramid Lake in northern Los Angeles County, just off Interstate 5, south of Gorman. Each offers

excellent reservoir views and many displays providing information about the SWP and its role in helping meet California's water needs. The Visitors Centers are open daily at no charge to the public.

Below are details on this May's three special events with contact numbers for more information about each event:

### **May 8 -- Oroville Dam Bus Tours**

On Saturday, May 8, four bus tours of Oroville Dam will be conducted, one each at 1 p.m., 2 p.m., 3 p.m., and 4 p.m.

Oroville Dam, tallest in the United States, is a vital Northern California facility for the SWP. Completed in 1967, the dam created Lake Oroville, with a storage capacity of 3.5 million acre-feet. Lake Oroville is the second largest reservoir in California, surpassed in size only by the federal Central Valley Project's Shasta Lake near Redding.

Each of the May 8 dam bus tours will take about 45 minutes. Tours will originate in downtown Oroville at Montgomery and Huntoon Streets, take Olive Highway to Kelly Ridge Road, onto Royal Oaks Drive, cross the top of the dam, returning to Oroville at Montgomery Street, via Oroville Dam Boulevard.

A tour guide will be aboard each bus. Tours will include tour guide presentations and video tapes showing Oroville Dam construction.

Persons wishing to take a tour can sign up where the bus will be boarded at Montgomery and Huntoon streets, starting shortly after noon on May 8. DWR staff will be present there to answer questions about the lake, tours and recreational opportunities at Lake Oroville.

Persons wishing more information about the Oroville bus tours may call the Oroville Field Division headquarters at (530) 534-2303, then 0, to reach the receptionist.

### **May 15 -- Fishing Day at O'Neill Forebay**

On Saturday, May 15, the 15th annual Kids' Fishing Day will be held at O'Neill Forebay near San Luis Reservoir. Largest offstream reservoir in the United States, San Luis Reservoir can store more than 2 million acre-feet of water. This event is limited to youngsters 15 and under. There is no fee for the event but there is a State parks admission fee.

Starting at 8 a.m., the event features fishing, with prizes, for young anglers, with bait provided. Lunch will be served at 11 a.m.

Entrance to this O'Neill Forebay event is on State Highway 152, eight miles west of the intersection with Interstate 5, and about 15 miles west of Los Banos. O'Neill Forebay

provides excellent fishing, especially for striped bass.

This event is hosted by DWR, State Department of Parks and Recreation staff and volunteers from the region. It is financed in part by the Four Rivers Natural History Association, along with contributions from area merchants and interested individuals.

For more information, contact DWR Guide Eva McClelland at (209) 827-5353.

### **May 21 -- Student Visit Day at Edmonston**

On Friday, May 21, about 250 students from schools in Taft, Maricopa, Elk Hills and Buttonwillow will enjoy a special Water Awareness Day at the Edmonston Pumping Plant, south of Bakersfield, just east of Interstate 5.

This students day is a tradition sponsored by DWR's San Joaquin Field Division, which operates the pumping plant. Located at the foot of the Tehachapi Mountains, Edmonston pumps SWP water nearly 2,000 feet up and over the Tehachapi range for use in Southern California.

This event features water safety and water conservation demonstrations, plus fishing at a special fish pond. Lunch, T-shirts and water conservation handouts will be provided. The event will begin at 9:30 a.m. and conclude about 1 p.m.

More information is available by contacting Tom Madden, safety supervisor in DWR's San Joaquin Field Division, at (661) 858-5500.

### **ACWA Conference Exhibit**

In addition to the above special events, DWR during Water Awareness Month will also show a special exhibit of SWP water distribution on May 5-7 at the annual Spring Conference of the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) in Monterey.

The DWR exhibit at the ACWA convention will show the extensive service areas of the SWP contractors, public water agencies which have long-term contracts to purchase SWP water. For more information about the ACWA Conference, visit their web site:

[http://www.acwanet.com/events/acwa\\_events.asp](http://www.acwanet.com/events/acwa_events.asp)

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The Department of Water Resources operates and maintains the State Water Project, provides dam safety and flood control and inspection services, assists local water districts in water management and water conservation planning, and plans for future statewide water needs.

[Back to Top of Page](#)

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